

# **Meditation on the threefold nature of existence**

## ***Tilakkhana Bhāvanā***

### **The logic of this reflection**

#### **1. Instability (*aniccā*)**

Every object perceived is a mental construct (*sankhāra*) or phenomenon.

Mental constructs are of two kinds: **subjective** and **objective**

Every subjective construct is **personalized** as “mine,” and becomes – the “self”

Every objective construct is **alienated** as – “things” in the external “world.”

The subject and object build an emotional relationship. This emotional relationship builds suffering.

Every construct is dependent on conditions.

What is dependent on conditions is unstable (*anicca*)

**All constructs are unstable** (*sabbe sankhāra aniccā*).

#### **2. Painfulness (*dukkha*)**

All constructs that I call mine or myself are **unstable**.

What is unstable is **insecure**.

What is insecure is **unpleasant**.

What is unpleasant is **painful** (*dukkha*).

**All constructs are painful** (*sabbe sankhāra dukkhā*).

#### **3. Impersonality (*anatta*)**

What is painful is **not as I want**.

What is not as I want is **not under my power**.

What is not under my power is **not mine**.

What is not mine **cannot be personalized**.

What cannot be personalized is **impersonal** – not mine, me, or my “self.”

**All experience is impersonal** (*sabbe dhammā anattā*).

All that is impersonal should be discarded.

To discard is to become dispassionate.

What cannot be personal should not be personalized.

If what cannot be personal has been personalized, grief, lamentation, pain, distress, and depression follow. To solve this problem one should depersonalize.

**All constructs when depersonalized cease to be uncomfortable.**

When one understands the instability, painfulness and the impersonality of things, one becomes dispassionate and compassionate towards all beings, without making any distinction between oneself and others, which leads to selfless happiness, which is tranquil, and introspective of the impersonality of all experience, **which ends all suffering**.

All **suffering** is **self-centred**. When **self** is **absent** all **suffering** comes to an **end**.

All **normal human beings** are **suffering** from the **delusion of existence**. They imagine they exist, when they are not.

All common folk are **insane** (*sabbe putujjanā ummattakā*).

When they **awaken** from the dream of existence, they become **sane** and **all suffering** comes to an **end**.

**This is real Buddhist psychotherapy.**

## Meaning of Good Thoughts

**DISPASSION**: is the opposite of passion. Passion is an emotional reaction to a pleasant sensation, which is also an emotional excitement. It occurs unconsciously, depending on conditions. It occurs only when the necessary conditions are present. Passion is also self-centred and possessive. It leads to conflict and unhappiness. Dispassion, on the other hand, is the absence of emotional excitements. It relaxes the body, and calms the mind. It makes one comfortable, peaceful, and happy. It is unselfish, self sacrificing, and is interested in the welfare of others.

**COMPASSION**: is to be interested in the welfare of all beings, without making a distinction between oneself, and others. It recognizes that other's happiness or unhappiness is as important as one's own. Compassion broadens the mind, resulting in freedom from self-centredness, worry and unhappiness.

**HAPPINESS**: is distinct from pleasure. Pleasure is a sensation arising from stimulation of the senses, and is accompanied by tension and emotional excitement. It is a disturbance of the body and mind. True happiness, on the other hand, is the absence of emotional excitement. It is also unselfish, while pleasure is self-centred. Happiness is a selfless freedom from worries and anxieties. It is a pleasant state of undisturbed, relaxed, calm, peaceful, happiness.

**TRANQUILITY**: is a state of relaxation of the body and calmness of mind, due to the absence of emotional disturbances. It is a peaceful stillness of mind, which is conducive to clarity of thought, and the gaining of insight into the realities of life.

**IN-SIGHT** is the introspective awareness of the inner mental process. When the calm and tranquil mind is turned inwards, it becomes aware of what is going on within. It becomes aware of the unconscious reaction of the body to environmental stimulation of the senses. The reaction is seen in its four stages: perception, conception, emotion, and action. This stops the unconscious reaction, because the unconscious reaction cannot continue while it is conscious. The mind has become conscious of the unconscious process; the determinism of the experience is seen, resulting in seeing the instability, insecurity, and impersonality of the experience. This means the absence of a self or personality is understood. Then one knows that the "Experience", which is determined by conditions, is all there is. The objective "world" and the subjective "self" are but products of this impersonal experience of perception. This "experience" of "existence" is seen to be unstable, insecure and impersonal, and therefore not desirable. This "understanding" is "in-sight".

Therefore introspective awareness leads to dispassion, which leads to compassion, which leads to happiness, which leads to tranquility, which leads to introspection, which leads to understanding of what is inside, which is in-sight. Insight begins the cyclical sequence again. And so the mind continues recycling this way until it is fully awakened from "the dream of existence".